GEO Mountains Small Data Grants Call 2024 - 2025

The Global Network on Observations and Information in Mountain Environments (GEO Mountains) is a Work Programme Initiative of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), co-led by the Mountain Research Initiative (MRI) and the Institute of Atmospheric Sciences and Climate of the National Research Council of Italy (CNR-ISAC). GEO Mountains connects research and mountain observations networks to enhance the discoverability, accessibility, and usability of data and information pertaining to environmental and socio-economic systems in mountain regions worldwide.

In this context, and thanks to the support from the Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC) via the Adaptation at Altitude Programme, we are launching a **second small data grants call (2024-2025)** for projects that explore mountain monitoring, data, and information, with priority given to projects focused on the following mountain regions: *Andes, Central Asia, East Africa, the Caucasus, and Hindu Kush Himalaya*.

As 2025 is the UN-declared International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (IYGP2025), we encourage proposals that align with the themes of the IYGP2025 as potential contributions to that observance. We especially welcome proposals that explicitly address key observation gaps, including data and information on the human dimensions of deglaciation and the societal impacts and adaptation needs associated with the cryosphere in a changing climate.

Depending on the quality and merit of the proposed projects, we expect to support up to two projects per region, with a **contribution of up to CHF 10,000** per project available on a competitive basis. Project duration can be up to one year, and all projects should conclude no later than 30 September 2025. Below is a (non-exhaustive) list of the types of projects that could be supported:

- Compilation and development of databases, programmes, and/or tools to describe, access, visualise, combine, analyse, and/or apply geospatial datasets corresponding to mountain regions.
- Mountain data rescue or digitisation projects, with sharing / publication of the resultant digital data for online access (e.g. via Zenodo or similar open data repository).
- Curation and preparation of novel mountain datasets for publication or sharing online and/or in peer-reviewed data journals (e.g. ESSD, Scientific Data etc.).
- Mountain data evaluation or inter-comparison projects.
- The integration of various types of mountain data with numerical models (data-driven, physics-based, or hybrid) or scenarios to answer key scientific, practical, or policy-relevant questions.
- Education, training, or capacity development activities related to the data lifecycle (including campaign planning, infrastructure specifications, data collection, data transmission, quality assurance, documentation, storage, and sharing). Contributions to the MRI's Mountain Observatories or Unified High-elevation Observation Platform (UHOP) concepts are particularly encouraged.

Some useful resources are available via the GEO Mountains General and In Situ Data Inventories. Others include the GEO Knowledge Hub and GEOSS, and other resources offered by other GEO Work Programme Activities. All projects should follow the principles of Open Science to the greatest extent possible. Further details on eligibility and funding conditions are provided in the **Annex: General Eligibility and Funding Conditions.**

Proposals must be submitted via this online form. Please ensure all requested information is provided, as incomplete submissions will not be evaluated. **Deadline for proposals: 3 June 2024, 23:59 CEST.**
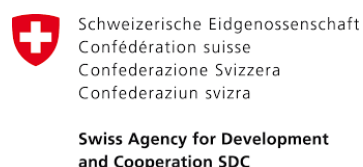
Key dates and milestones:

Call for GEO Mountains Small Grants 2024-2025 opens:	**15 April 2024**
Information webinar – Call details and opportunity for Q&A (registration):	**6 May 2024, 14:00 CEST**
Deadline for proposal submission via this form:	**3 June 2024, 23:59 CEST**
Confirmation of successful applications:	**by 19 July 2024**
Projects start:	**1 October 2024**
Projects end with deliverables completed:	**30 September 2025**
Projects reporting and results' dissemination:	**October - December 2025**

For questions, please contact the GEO Mountains Secretariat at: geomountains@mountainresearchinitiative.org.

Part of:

Supported by:

Annex: Small Data Grants General Eligibility and Funding Conditions

1. The GEO Mountains Small Data Grants Programme 2024-2025 aims to support individuals to collaborate to improve the data and information situation across the world's mountain regions, and generate practical outputs, thereby supporting GEO Mountains' key objectives while focusing on the following mountain regions: *Andes, Central Asia, East Africa, the Caucasus, and Hindu Kush Himalaya*.

2. All project proponent(s) must have full and updated profiles in the MRI Expert Database at the time of proposal submission, detailing expertise and/or a track record of recent projects or publications that correspond to the proposed activity. If awarded funding, proponents must also consent to becoming members of the GEO Mountains network and being added to the GEO Mountains mailing list.

3. Project proponents should encourage the inclusion and participation of early-career researchers (ECRs, generally up to 5 years after MSc or PhD) and researchers from developing countries as part of the proposed project. More generally, the open and inclusive nature of the GEO Mountains network should be respected.

4. Proponents are expected to generate at least matching funding and/or in-kind contributions that, combined with the GEO Mountains' contribution, can sufficiently support the planned activity. Types of costs eligible for support from GEO Mountains' contribution can include the hosting and facilitation of project meetings or workshops; researcher / database developer time; contribution support for student assistance; equipment purchases that directly contribute to the expected project outputs; materials for teaching or training purposes; or open access publication costs for publishable datasets (ideally in specialist data journals, where applicable). Priority for funding allocation should be to support the participation and inclusion of ECRs or those from developing countries. GEO Mountains excludes the use of its funds for personal travel to attend conferences, or for overheads incurred by the host institution or institution of affiliation of the proponents.

5. In keeping to the GEO Mountains' focus on integrated social-ecological mountain systems, we encourage inter- and/or transdisciplinary projects, collaborations, and co-production of knowledge that consider both natural and social sciences and humanities, plus different types of data (e.g. in situ, remotely sensed, modelled). Where possible and/or relevant, projects should also include other stakeholders outside of academia such as practitioners, NGOs, or other community members.

6. Successful applicants will be required to sign a grant transfer agreement and will need to liaise with the GEO Mountains Secretariat throughout the scheduled activity to publicise the project and all its resultant outputs. Once details of the activity are confirmed, the project will be showcased on the GEO Mountains website and promoted via social media. After the project's conclusion, a contribution to the GEO Mountains website (e.g. in the form of a news article and/or presentation at a GEO Mountains event) may also be requested.

7. A full activity and financial report is required within six weeks of the project's conclusion. This report should describe key outcomes and datasets developed, plus how the funding was utilised. The GEO Mountains Secretariat will provide reporting templates.

8. All outputs that ensue from the supported project, including oral or poster presentations at conferences as well as reports or scientific papers, must include the GEO Mountains logo and acknowledge the GEO Mountains funding contribution, with a copy of all products provided to the GEO Mountains Secretariat as they become available. If the activity generates new datasets, they must be shared under an open data license such as CC BY 4.0.

9. Proposals will be evaluated by the GEO Mountains Co-Leads and the network Coordinator, in tandem with external experts. As such, these individuals are ineligible to apply. The applicable evaluation criteria include the following aspects:
   a) High degree of scientific merit and quality in terms of design, methods, and analyses.
   b) Adheres to the MRI guiding principles for activities and GEO Mountains' Open Science principles.
   c) Includes the participation of early career researchers, as well as ensures genuine steps are taken to achieve inclusivity and diversity in project activities.
   d) Scope of the activity addresses and targets key data and information needs in at least one of the 5 mountain regions targeted by this call.
   e) The main proponent(s) demonstrate expertise and a scientific track record in the chosen topics, including full profile entries in the MRI's Expert Database.

10. Proposals must be submitted online via the specific call's submission form (applications via email will not be considered). All requested information must be provided by the specified deadline. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

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MRI: 10.04.2024